
CENTRAL REGIONAL COUNCIL ON WORKFORCE SERVICES
Department of Workforce Services
1385 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84115
Monthly Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 22, 2005
12:30 p.m.

Presiding: Greg Diven, Chair

Present: LaRay Brown, Edith Fauver, Stephanie Frohman, Norman Fitzgerald, Tony Gomez, Representative Brent Goodfellow, Bev Graham, John Hill, Paul Jackson, Commissioner Colleen Johnson, Doug Johnston, Nancy Malecker, Jill Merritt, Akilah Messado, Jon Pierpont, Karen Silver, Kerry Steadman, **Gordon Swenson**, Russ Thelin

Absent: Allan Ayoub, Linda Fife, Dr. Stephen Ronnenkamp, Steven Rosenberg, Louie Silveira

Excused: Ron Andersen, Councilman Jim Bradley, Charles Daud, Jennifer Carroll, M. Ali Wilkinson, Julie Zimmerman

Guests: Mike Richardson – DWS State Council Director and Director of Legislative Affairs & Communications

Staff: Karla Aguirre, Leno Franco, Steve Leyba, Diane Lovell, Brent Newren, Mary Peterson

Call to Order, Announcements & Opening Business

Chairman Greg Diven called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm. He began by welcoming LaRay Brown, Regional Director of Child & Family Services for the Human Services Department. Ms. Brown will replace Robert Haywood on Council.

Mr. Diven then recognized Jon Pierpont and his staff's efforts with the Katrina evacuees at Camp Williams. He remarked about the excellent leadership and contributions of the Department of Workforce Services who were heavily involved in this successful effort.

Mr. Diven introduced Mike Richardson, the State Council Director and Director of Legislative Affairs & Communications who will speak later in the meeting regarding the upcoming Legislative Forum. Mr. Richardson has also been involved in the Automotive Roundtable which he will also discuss.

Gerald Biesinger, Vice President of Human Resource for Layton Construction is interested in being a member of Council. Mr. Diven indicated that Mr. Biesinger had planned to join us today but had a last minute conflict. He also noted that one more vacancy for a large business remains to be filled.

The Council of Councils Conferences will be one day only event on Thursday, October 13, 2005 at the Provo Marriott. Draft Agenda were sent out to all members and copies were provided today which included the descriptions of breakout sessions. Governor Huntsman, Tani Downing, **Executive Director** and Mason Bishop, Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Employment and Training Administration are special guests. Mr. Diven also acknowledged Paul Jackson and John Hill who will present during the breakout sessions. Mr. Diven thanked all those who have registered for this event and asked any others who have not yet registered to contact Diane Lovell.

The Worksite Learning Focus Group with Laurel Morris and her team is scheduled to begin at 7:30 am on Thursday, October 20, 2005 at the 1385 South State Street location. This meeting will focus on worksite learning and the best way to approach employers about becoming a worksite learning site. An additional 800 worksites are needed to help meet our goal for the coming year. Greg Diven asked if any others would like to participate in this meeting group, please contact Diane Lovell or Laurel Morris.

Greg Diven referred Council to Tab 3 in packets where it was noted that the next scheduled Executive Committee Meeting is November 3, 2005. In addition a tentative date for the Legislative Forum is scheduled for November 17, 2005 at 7:30 am followed by Council meeting. Mr. Diven indicated that the schedule for November will need to be reviewed and finalize dates for the Legislative Forum after hearing more about the department's legislative agenda from Mike Richardson.

Diane Lovell noted that the Executive Committee Meeting for October will not be held due to the Council of Council's being held that day from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. In the past the Council of Council's has been a two day event leaving time for the Executive Committee Meeting directly following. **However, Ms. Lovell indicated after hearing from Mike Richardson on the Legislative Issues, we can determine if the Executive Committee Meeting for October should be rescheduled.**

Brent Newren, Manager of the Downtown Employment Center shared highlights from a handout regarding this Center. He noted that this center is unique in that it serves a diverse population, individuals that are in temporary housing as well as a large homeless population. Approximately 24,000 customers have been referred this past year along with 1293 new registrations. He also provided the Support Services monthly averages for Eligibility Applications, FEP Cases and GA Cases. The Customer Service Rating for this center in 2005 on a scale of 1-5 was 4.3%.

Mr. Newren highlighted the community partners that were involved during the period of July 2004 through June 2005 including Community Action Program (CAP), Indian Walk-In Center, The Road Home, Volunteers of America, Crossroads Urban Center and The Weigand Center.

1. Consent Agenda

Greg Diven asked for a motion to approve the minutes of August 25, 2005 Council and September 8, 2005 Executive Committee Meetings.

Norman Fitzgerald motioned to approve the minutes from the August 25, 2005 Central Region Council Meeting and the Executive Committee Meeting minutes from September 8, 2005. John Hill seconded the motion. All voted “Aye”. The motion carried.

Greg Diven noted that at the August 25, 2005 Council meeting there was not a full quorum present. Therefore, the need to ratify the June 23, 2005 Central Regional Council and July 21st and August 11, 2005 Executive Committee Meeting minutes was needed. Mr. Diven noted that electronic votes in favor of the August 25, 2005 Action Items were received from Charles Daud, Julie Zimmerman, Jennifer Carroll and Ali Wilkinson. He asked for a motion for the above ratification.

Norman Fitzgerald motioned to ratify the June 23, 2004 Central Regional Council and July 21, 2005 and August 11, 2005 Executive Committee Meeting minutes. Karen Silver seconded the motion. All voted “Aye”. The motion passed.

Next Chairman Diven asked for a motion to ratify the Salt Lake County Youth EmployAbility Services (YES) contract.

Karen Silver motioned to ratify the actions regarding the Salt Lake County Youth EmployAbility Services (YES) contract. Russ Thelin seconded the motion. All voted “Aye”. The motion carried.

2. Regional Director’s Report

Jon Pierpont, Regional Director shared details of the role DWS played in the hurricane Katrina efforts at Camp Williams and the successes of this effort. 15 plus staff were on site each day and Mr. Pierpont emphasized the “team” efforts and the leadership shown throughout this event. In addition, DWS coordinated a Job Fair within 48 hours for the evacuees who wanted to participate where over 100 employers wanted to be involved.

DWS took the lead on relocating people and as time went by there was less demand to relocate as the evacuees felt very welcome in Utah. Jon Pierpont noted that this was a very rewarding experience and that DWS should feel very good about their presence.

Senator Brent Goodfellow toured Camp Williams with the FEMA Director and commended Jon Pierpont and his staff and noted that Utah really knew what they were doing in this effort.

Jon Pierpont then spoke about the Job Fair to be held today at Horizonte, 1234 South Main from 1-5 pm and noted that employers are seeing greater demand to fill jobs. Nancy Malecker noted that there is a need for DWS to help recruit and noted that her organization (UTA) wants to be involved in these Job Fairs. Mr. Pierpont indicated he will pass this information to Laurel Morris.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is sponsoring an EmployAbility Job Fair on October 25, 2005 in conjunction with DWS to help improve the employment

opportunities for individuals who have disabilities and are work ready. Russ Thelin provided a handout with more details along with a list of the participating employers. Mr. Thelin asked Council to spread the word regarding this EmployAbility Job Fair to be held at 720 South 200 East from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Construction Career Days is scheduled for September 27-29th. Jon Pierpont noted that construction is one of DWS targeted industries and will be one of the next series of roundtable discussions with leaders in this industry and what they have to offer. Mr. Pierpont noted that this will help to educate parents, students and educators in this area and recommended that Council attend Family Night on Tuesday, September 28th.

Jon Pierpont reported on the on-line services DWS provides and noted that in January, 2005 - 29.97% of employers were using this on-line service as their primary means of finding candidates to fill their jobs. As of September 19, 2005 - 49.7% were now using this service which is a 19.74% increase which exceeds the state average by 21%. Mr. Pierpont commended Laurel Morris and her team for their efforts in educating employers regarding on-line service.

Jon Pierpont then spoke regarding WIA and Dislocated Workers Funding and noted that this has been a banner year for training. However, not as much money was allocated for the new fiscal year creating the need to move some training dollars.

Mr. Pierpont provided Council with a background of training dollars. For several years the Wagner Pfizter money has funded the Job Connection piece, which is the employer and department interface, our front-end services in our Employment Centers (core services). Over the last several years those dollars have diminished and we have been allowed to move monies from the WIA and Dislocated Workers funds.

It has forced our region to make strategic changes to the way we administer the dollars this year. Currently 90% of WIA and Dislocated Workers funds are obligated for this fiscal year. Karla Aguirre has been asked to identify some of the strategies Central Region will use this year to help with this shortage.

Karen Silver asked if the 60% from the Food Stamp accuracy rate bonus that was received could be transferred to the Core Services. Jon Pierpont will discuss this with Tani Downing and Chris Love.

Karla Aguirre indicated that we have fostered an exceptional training program and didn't want to shut this down. To that end, several strategies have been developed which include:

1. Identify which funding stream is obligated and move the dollars to another training area. Funds not being used will be moved back from FEP.
2. Pool of TANF money (non-FEP) for children under 18 will be looked at as a possibility to fund adult and dislocated workers.
3. Soft cap limit of \$2,000 funding for training will be in effect.

In addition, eliminate and review some programs including:

- Paid internships for adults will be eliminated for this year
- Employment Counselors are asked to look at accounts to see if the obligated money is actually being used
- Ask Employment Counselors to look at the account of their customers and the cost of programs to make sure that what is obligated is actually needed.
- If there is a school that is offered for less, ask the Employment Counselors to refer the customer to the less expensive program. The customer can, however, pay the difference between what is allowed and the actual cost.
- Customers between the ages of 18 and 21 were enrolled using Adult money and the Youth Program will be asked to work with those customers and not use Adult money.

Ms. Aguirre indicated that Diane Lovell has a big responsibility to let the Vendors know about these changes. She also noted that we are trying to utilize other funding streams.

Paul Jackson suggested that as we look at the demands and challenges employers are having finding qualified individuals, if DWS could partnership with the employers and have some of the training sponsored by the industry itself.

Chairman Diven noted that this will impact vendors and impact their businesses. Diane Lovell has sent a letter to the vendors with this information.

Karla Aguirre noted that at the Council of Council's meeting, it will be recommended that the priority points be bumped up from 8 to 10 which will help serve those with the most need. She also indicated that there are a lot of jobs which may help offset the need for training.

Steve Leyba noted that it is important to recognize that the training money is obligated over time as the training programs are for more than one fiscal year.

Kerry Steadman posed two observations:

1. Is the training provided meeting our goals and is there some training more effective than others?
2. Has there ever been a cost sharing issue where the feds say "can't do that, you've got to do it all or nothing" or in other words, could you stretch dollars by saying we have limited resources so if you come up with 25 we'll do 75 and be able to stretch over a period of time or is that becoming a logistical nightmare trying to get something, I realize that is a two edged sword.

Senator Goodfellow asked "are we getting less money because our unemployment rate went down?" Jon Pierpont indicated "yes".

Mike Richardson indicated that money stacked up and for a while and we lost the focus of training. Jon Pierpont was asked to help and he used the back log of money doing a

wonderful job getting the people in the pipeline trained. Having a lot of people trained is a good thing. In addition, TANF money is still available and those meeting the definition for this money will still have training options.

Chairman Diven asked Senator Brent Goodfellow if some of the surplus from the State could be used for training. Senator Goodfellow noted that there are several areas that have funding shortages and many areas where these dollars could be used.

Karla Aguirre then moved on with information on FEP Participation which went into effect in August, 2005. She recapped this subject noting the 34 hours/week is the participation for priority training. Ms. Aguirre provided a FEP Participation Update noting where Central Region stands as of September 21, 2005. A handout of this update was provided.

3. Committee Reports & 2006 Strategic Planning Updates

Chairman Diven referred Council to Tab 5 for the Priority Goals for the Executive Committee and noted there is a lot to accomplish. The yellow pages under Tab 5 outlined the goals for the other committees. He asked for any comments and/or concerns and none were expressed. These are the goals that will be in place for this fiscal year.

Basic Needs – Karen Silver reported the following:

1. DWS Service cards that were worked on three years ago are still not available in Spanish and needs to be done. Jon Pierpont indicated that one is being worked on statewide. Ms. Silver will provide monthly reminders on this subject.
2. Karen Silver attended a UTA Forum where she asked for an overlay of bus routes to see where there are gaps. John English indicated that there is an overlay of the current bus routes. Ms. Silver will follow-up with John English on this matter.
3. Return on Investment regarding people obtaining jobs from WIA training. She noted that Basic Needs Committee receives this report if anyone would like a copy.

Edie Fauver noted there is a brochure being developed targeting the non-English younger family members and steps to help get the older family member out. Senator Brent Goodfellow commented that he took a legislative tour in Box Elder and Cache Valley and that UTA bragged how they have now have bus services from one end of the valley to another. Cache Valley is providing free bus services.

Marketing – Jill Merritt noted the Marketing Committee is revising their goals. The discussion centered on supporting the focus group in developing marketing materials.

Kevin Schofield recommended having Quinn McKay as the keynote speaker for Councils April retreat. Mr. McKay is a graduate from Harvard Business School, Human Resource Director, Professional Consultant, Author and an engaging speaker. Further discussion will take place on this request.

4. Executive Roundtable & 9/27 Automotive Heavy Duty Technician Roundtable

Chairman Diven announced that the Automotive Heavy Duty Technician Roundtable scheduled for September 27, 2005 has been postponed. More information regarding a new date will be forthcoming.

On October 13, 2005, Dan Curtis from Larry H. Miller has agreed to be at the Council of Council's to provide and share concerns about this industry and make suggestions of how we can help.

5. Legislative Priorities – Mike Richardson

Mike Richardson commented on the Automotive Heavy Duty Technician Roundtable and strongly recommended to be a great catalyst with education and noted that discussions coming from Central Region were impressive. He noted that we want to meet the needs of the Automotive Industry.

Mr. Richardson provided a report on the Legislative Priorities which include:

1. Simplify reporting for the Food Stamp Program, Medicaide and TANF, (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families). It is an option in the Federal Farm bill which reduces the burden on customers and the department to make it more efficiently ran. We have several representatives in the house that is willing to, we think, co-sponsor this, based on it coming out of the national County and State Legislatures needs held this summer and most states have already moved to this so we think it is an efficiency focus and will try to get some traction on this.
2. General Assistance – for customers who are single who have had either a major disability problem or a temporary disability problem (fell off the roof and they can't work) they get a very small grant from the State. During the recession our caseloads went up as did Food Stamps, TANF and Medicaide and the discussion today about employers having the need for employees we haven't seen that with this population yet, we haven't seen this with the Food Stamp population yet. Studies we have done in the department is that is usually 14 months after the recession ends. We just keep hoping that's going to happen but right now we are spending more money than we can cover within the department and are asking the Legislature to help out with that. Again, I don't have a number on that but we will ask for a significant amount of dollars to help that most vulnerable population.
3. Then we talked about participation, as an important issue on TANF we're asking for childcare dollars to support this increased participation. We're also anticipating the Federal TANF reauthorization which we've anticipated for a long time we're hoping this comes quickly and we're asking for childcare. Now, we are also pursuing childcare dollars in various ways including bringing private dollars in. We leave some money at the Federal level if we could put State match in we could draw it in at a very nice return on the State investment and we are pursuing with some Representatives some options to bring State money that we are already spending in as match and we're trying to get private dollars in so we're pursuing in many areas but we are asking for some help on the hill as well.

4. Food Stamp caseload we are experiencing at an all time high on food stamp cases and would like some State money to leverage bringing Federal dollars in.

Those are kinda the programmatic areas and then we are asking for authority to:

- Move some money over to cover a software program that we are working on that will help Unemployment Insurance automate some additional things on both the collection U.I. contributions, we call it contributions, ? call it taxes.
- Also, we're asking for some help on a software project that we are doing it's an enterprise project with the Health Department and Human Service called EREP. We are getting towards; made a lot of progress and now we need additional dollars. We had a delegation of staff go to Washington and got a commitment for some additional federal dollars, a very nice match rate, so we're asking for a small amount of money there as well.

Those are areas that will be going to hill asking for legislation and/or allocation. The other area I'll just mention is that there is a discussion in Interim right now about the coordination between adult education and workforce and we are working very hard with our partners of education to show our Senators and Representatives the good work that is going on in places like Horizonte, here and will be making a presentation in October at Interim, so just for your information. That's really what we've got on the legislative side. Any thoughts about what we should be focusing on? Response to those items?

You didn't mention anything about the surplus.

Well, the irony is we've got the economy really heating up and the employer really needs jobs and we are asking for money to cover caseloads. So, I did think I got it in there but it's just hidden so.

Greg Diven then indicated that as a Region Council we need to determine which ones we want to champion and where we want to focus. He listed about 8 things and asked Mike Richardson if there is a priority in terms of which are the first and second most important items he discussed.

Mike Richardson responded that it depends on which constituency you are talking about. The GA is a critical issue for those most in need and we have not prioritized these. Food Stamp caseloads are a priority for those receiving benefits and us trying to get benefits out on time. We have some staff that are going to be cut in the department, Jon probably has more on this than I do, we're losing some federal dollars that we've been allowed to use to cover some things, so we'll be losing some staff so it's critical that we get these food stamp dollars to make sure we process cases on time and that kind of thing. It's hard for me to prioritize at this point, now maybe when the Governor sends his numbers back that will prioritize it for us. We hope to have it this week.

Greg Diven posed to Council how they want to handle this because come November when we meet with the Legislative Representatives he would like to have a focus.

Karen Silver asked if there was a possibility of asking Mike Richardson, as soon as the department finds out from the Governor what the priorities are, that we receive an email regarding this information and then pick our three top issues and send this back to Greg Diven or Diane Lovell so that we will know. Greg Diven noted that we will work on this by email basically.

Norm Fitzgerald noted that generally the department, justifiably so, seems to focus on delivery services and indicated that he feels that we need to be very cautious and look at the request for the software and the simplified reporting as essential parts of improving on those services. If you don't keep on top of the ball you will get rolled over somewhere along the way and feels those would at least need a deserved look. Mike Richardson acknowledged that is a really good point and that EREP is a software program that is replacing a software program that was developed in the mid eighties, came out of Alaska and North Dakota, and the states who run that system, which there are several in this country, the experts tell us they are going to be in a mess because they are not replacing it and for us to wait would have been very expensive and we think that's a good investment and we think that, Norm, is a very good point.

Greg Diven indicated that we will look for guidance from Senator Goodfellow and perhaps he could give feedback as to what is realistic on this list and is there anything that is "pie in the sky" that would never have a chance and does he feel there are items that he feels needs more discussion. Senator Goodfellow responded that he would be glad to do this if he could see some dollar amounts.

Mike Richardson said we have a briefing paper on each of these issues, not the Adult Ed piece, but all of the others we will have a briefing paper that will have the dollars and for those areas where we have sponsors; we will indicate those on the document. It will give you an idea of politically where it's at. Greg Diven noted that we will look forward to more information from him and make sure we get something put together.

Chairman Diven indicated that the other thing we need to be concerned about is what we do with the Legislative Forum as we invite the legislatures to come, we make an effort to call, contact, and drag these people in and need to make sure we have this organized in time for this to start happening, probably late October, early November to start making calls.

Diane Lovell indicated that we need to get the notices out well before that time, sometime next week, which Chairman Diven agreed.

Greg Diven noted that we are locked in for the Legislative Forum on November 17, 2005 at 7:30 am at the Metro Office and we will be focusing on several items and asked Diane Lovell if it was possible to mention some of these items in the message sent out. Jon Pierpont indicated that we should wait to receive guidance from Mike Richardson. Greg Diven indicated that once we hear from Mike Richardson we will begin to formulate the information, during the first week in October.

6. Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

7. New Business

There was no new business to report.

8. Public Comment

No public comment was made.

Chairman Greg Diven noted that he hopes to see everyone at the meeting on October 13th in lieu of the regular Council meeting. Also, he reminded Council about the Health and Wellness meeting which is on October 12th and 13th in Layton and asked Council, if attending, to go on the day of the 12th. If anyone needs additional information, Please let him know. The meeting was adjourned at 2:18 pm.